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ABSTRACT

This 12-week practicum intervention was designed to enhance the listening skills of 22 kindergartners by means of a cooperative home-school developmental program. In the class, stories and poetry with listening themes were read aloud on a daily basis. Story structure was stressed. Puppets, flannel board stories, and dramatics were used. In addition, a classroom listening center was set up. Questions were asked before, during, and after stories were read aloud. Through weekly newsletters, parents received listening tips to use at home with their children. Records and tapes were sent home so that the children could listen to them and use them to complete a story-related activity. Listening was stressed during the entire school day and during special listening training which was given in 30-minute lessons, 3 days per week. Practicum evaluation data indicated that even though all of the objectives were not met, significant growth did occur. Four of the five practicum objectives were achieved by the majority of the participating children. Parents were supportive and enthusiastic throughout the implementation period. Appendices provide survey instruments, related materials, and a list of 42 books used for take-home activities. Fifty references are listed. (RH)

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Using a Cooperative Home-School Developmental Program to Enhance the Listening Skills of Kindergarten Children

by

Geraldine E. Westwood

Cluster 32

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A Practicum I Report presented to the
Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1990

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

Verifier: B. Jerry Marcus

B. Jerry Marcus

Principal, Battlefield Elementary School

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August 20, 1990

Date

This practicum report was submitted by Geraldine E. Westwood under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved:

November 9, 1990

Date of Final Approval of Report

Polly W. Peterson, Ph.D., Adviser

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Special thanks are due to the 24 children and their parents in this writer's classroom for making my last year as a kindergarten teacher so rewarding.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of the Community

This practicum was conducted in a large, fast-growing county located midway between two large, metropolitan cities on the eastern coast of the United States.

At 410 square miles, the county is one of the largest counties in the state. While there is no shortage of land, the area is the third-fastest growing in the state due to its location on a major interstate highway. Businesses are relocating to the area because of low taxes, abundant labor supply, and easy accessibility to the interstate.

The area was a busy port in Colonial days mainly due to its location on the Rappahannock River. During the Civil War, the area was a valuable piece of real estate due to its situation astride most of the regions major transportation arteries. Northerners were eager to capture the area and Southerners were equally determined to defend it, thus turning the area into a bloody battleground for four years. Four major battles left more than 100,000 casualities. No region on the continent has ever witnessed such concentrated, fierce fighting. According to historians, more Americans died in battle in

and around the area than anywhere else in the United States.

Because of its location on a major interstate highway, thousands of new residents have settled in the area. Many of them are former residents from the more densely populated suburbia to the north and south. It is a one-hour drive each way between the major cities and the practicum city, with the majority commuting to jobs to the north. With the awesome amount of daily commuters, traffic is very congested and commuters are encouraged to make use of van and car pools or ride buses. It is hoped that within the next three years commuter rail service will become available, thus alleviating some of the traffic on the interstate.

The area is becoming very attractive to commuters and people seeking a less urban atmosphere. The land is cheaper and more plentiful. Years ago, the county had many large farms dotting the countryside, with logging being a major occupation. The landscape of parts of the county today are quickly being transformed from rural to suburban. Farmers have sold off their land for huge profits from developers and subdivisions now sprawl in their place.

The growth has led to an array of headaches. The growth has brought jobs, prosperity, houses, people, stores and restaurants. It has also brought regular traffic jams, higher taxes, the need for new schools, more

police and fire services, more recreation areas and better roads to handle the amount of traffic.

According to the United States Bureau of the Census, the population in 1980 was 34,435. In the spring of 1989, the county estimated its population to be about 51,000. The population is estimated to be 84% white, 15% black and 1% other.

The majority of children in this school are from families new to the area within the last two years. These "newcomers" tend to be well-educated, have middle-to-high incomes and are eager to become involved in school activities. A large number of military families live within the school district, due to its close proximity to army, navy and marine corp bases. Most of the families plan to remain in the vicinity indefinitely.

The community surrounding the school has changed within the last eight years. At least 30 subdivisions have been built during this time, most offering single family homes. A large Planned Unit Development (PUD) has been built directly across the road from the school which offers townhomes, garden-apartments, single family homes as well as a retirement community with cluster homes and two high-rise condominimums. A trailer park is also located nearby.

The area directly surrounding the school has been developed over the past two years. Four subdivisions,

as well as a church, a day care center, a strip shopping center, a convenience store and a bank have been built to accomodate the growth taking place in the area.

In many families both parents work to support the family, with many commuting outside of the area. Many day care centers have been established to care for the children of these workers. These centers provide before and after school care as well as van service to and from school. Many children spend more of their time between day care and school than they spend at home.

The majority of children attending the writer's school come from middle income homes. Approximately 10% of the children receive either free or reduced price lunch. There are no Chapter I funded programs at this school.

According to the self-study report of the school done in the fall of 1989, the majority of the fathers are skilled workers (41.4%) or are engaged in a professional occupation (25.5%). The majority of mothers are homemakers (14.6%) or are employed as clerks, typists, etc. (18.6%). Almost 20% of the fathers are employed by the federal government, as well as 3.4% of the mothers.

Most of the parents having children attend the writer's school have completed high school. Only 11.4% of the fathers and 13.9% of the mothers have not completed high school according to the self-study report.

Writer's Work Setting

There have been numerous changes in the work setting due to increases in enrollment and changes in attendance zones. This writer's school is located on a 67 acre tract which also includes an intermediate school, as well as two physical education fields. Two hard surface areas provide space for a multitude of physical activities when grassy areas are unusuable. A nature trail leads off behind the physical education field.

The school was originally for 750 students in grades kindergarten through five. The plant was built to relieve overcrowding in three other county elementary schools. Over the last two years, the school enrollment has exceeded the 750 students consistently.

The school, opened in the fall of 1974, was the first open space facility in the county. It was designed to use Hauserman walls and cabinets which are moveable, making learning areas flexible.

Currently the writer's school population is 909 students with 87% white, 6.4% black and 6.6% other (Asian, American Indian, Hispanic, etc.). Contributing to this large enrollment is the population growth resulting from county development, the lack of elementary schools in the county causing extreme over-crowding in many schools and the number of children attending this writer's school who do not reside in the school district.

The school has a separate kindergarten area, three large learning areas, a cafetorium, a media center and an art room. The large learning areas contain classrooms partially separated and divided by moveable wall partitions, bookcases and closets. The kindergarten area houses five classes and a storage/workroom area. A sixth kindergarten class is located in the first grade area.

The three large learning areas house grades one through five. Area one contains seven first grade classes and a transitional first grade class. Area two contains four fifth grade and four fourth grade classes. Area three contains two third grade and six second grade classrooms.

The smaller learning areas are set aside for the guidance counselor's office, remedial reading and enrichment classes and speech instruction. The stage in the cafetorium is currently used as the music classroom, since the regular music classroom had to be used as a third grade classroom due to high enrollment. The school has no gymnasium, so physical education classes are held outdoors and during inclement weather, in the cafetorium.

Four third grade classes, two fourth grade classes and one fifth grade class are located in the modular classrooms located on the school grounds. Due to the large enrollment of children in these grades the school board must house these children in temporary classrooms

until attendance zone changes are put into effect next year.

The media center is set up in the center of the school and is easily accessible by teachers and students.

There are approximately 45 teachers, 5 instructional assistants, one school nurse and a half-time enrichment teacher employed as staff members at this school. A principal, assistant principal, secretary and an office assistant work in the administrative office.

The principal of the school is serving in his second year in that position, having served one year previously as assistant principal. The former principal retired in 1988 having served in that capacity since the opening of the school in 1974.

Due to extreme overcrowding, seven modular classrooms have been installed. A new school was to have opened in the fall of 1988, but due to default of the construction company, was delayed, forcing the school board to make other arrangements. Approximately 75 students in grades 2 through 5 at the writer's school were bussed to a nearby city's vacant intermediate school to alleviate the overcrowding. The kindergarten and first grade students who would of attended the new school were not bussed to the other school, but remained at the writer's school or the other elementary school involved, because they were so young. Teachers who were assigned to the new school

stayed at their former schools to teach these kindergarten and first grade students.

The new elementary school opened in September, 1989 but has not relieved any of the overcrowding experienced the last two years at the writer's school. Three additional modular units were purchased this year, along with the four used previously.

There are currently nine elementary schools, four intermediate schools, three high schools and a vocational center in the county. With the growth experienced or expected within the next three years, at least three new elementary schools, one intermediate and one high school will need to be built.

The total school population in the county is approximately 11,500 students. The school superintendent is projecting a 10% increase in school population for the 1990-1991 school year.

The school board is currently planning to build an elementary school to open in September 1991 to alleviate the overcrowding at this writer's school and two other elementary schools. School attendance zone changes are anticipated next year, but will not really be beneficial.

Writer's Role

This writer's role has remained relatively unchanged since entering the teaching profession. The writer's first year of teaching was spent in a rural area teaching

remedial mathematics in grades two through four. The following year she transferred to another rural area where she taught kindergarten for eight years.

This writer has served as a kindergarten teacher in the practicum setting since August of 1982. It is the responsibility of this writer to develop in children the skills, concepts, principles, appreciations, and attitudes which will promote the fullest possible development of themselves and others. This writer provides an educational program for students, assists in other school programs, and performs duties and responsibilities that are essential in the functioning of the total school program.

This writer's educational background includes an undergraduate degree in elementary education and a masters degree in curriculum and instruction with emphasis in early childhood education. A Postgraduate Professional teaching certificate with endorsements for grades kindergarten through seven is held by this writer.

Extra curricular activities in the practicum setting include serving as Grade Level Chairperson for two years, faculty social committee, child study committee, various self-study committees, cooperating teacher for preservice teachers, as well as representative on the Superintendent's Teacher Advisory Council. This writer has also conducted inservice workshops in the local area as well as at state and national conferences.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

From the personal experience of this writer and through conversations with teachers at other grade levels, it became obvious that children in this writer's school were having difficulty with listening skills.

Listening is one of the most important means of communication to the young child. The child learns so much through listening, that some observers believe it to be more important than any other mode of learning. Furthermore, since most instruction at the kindergarten level is given orally, listening is an avenue for obtaining information.

In this writer's school, the teachers are required to use the language arts portion of the assessment component of the statewide Standards of Learning (SOL) program. The Standards of Learning separate the interrelated aspects of language functioning into instructional units, so that each area of the language arts curricula is assessed--speaking, listening, writing and reading.

The Standards of Learning manual describes a model

lesson which sets the objective in context, discusses the specific criteria for evaluating student performance, and gives examples of how to teach and assess it. Each SOL has a uniform system for rating the student's proficiency level. A four-point scale is used for grading that focuses specifically on what skills and knowledge the student possesses in relation to the objective, rather than on the general level of the student's performance. The proficiency ratings are as follows:

4 Student's performance is beyond the requirements of the objective.

3 Student has a good grasp of the skills addressed in the objective and has met the requirements.

2 Student is beginning to attain the skills addressed in the objective but does not yet have a good grasp of them.

1 Student has major difficulty with the skills addressed in the objective.

At this writer's school, many kindergarten children were found to have difficulty passing the Language Arts Standards of Learning Objective K.2--The student will develop listening comprehension skills.

It was also found that many of the children scored below average (stanines 1-3) on the language skill area of the Metropolitan Readiness Test, Level 2, Form P which is administered each spring to all kindergarten children in the writer's school.

If the situation were improved, the kindergarten

children in the writer's school would have better listening skills. Briefly stated, this practicum addressed the problem that many kindergarten children had poor listening skills due to listening not being taught as a separate area of the curriculum.

Problem Documentation

This writer obtained from the principal of the school the records from the previous two years on the Assessment of Minimum Requirements which indicate the number of students passing and failing 75 % of the Standards of Learning objectives and the number of objectives most frequently not met by the students. This information is sent to the local school board office annually.

Table 1

Summary of the Assessment of Minimum Skills for Kindergarten 1988 & 1989

Number of Students	Number Achieving Total DPL Score	Objectives Most Frequently Not Met By Students	Number Attaining 75% of Language Arts SOL Objectives
1988			
149	130	K.2, 5, 6, 7, 8	130
1989*			
126	111	K.1, 2, 8, 9	111

Note-- DPL Score = Desired Performance Level Score
* 41 students not counted in this schools report

This writer was also able to obtain the results from the Metropolitan Readiness Test, Level 2, Form P for 1988 and 1989 from the principal. This writer used the language skill area of this test because it measured school language concepts, as well as listening; skills both necessary for the development of reading comprehension (see Table 2).

In reviewing these test scores, approximately 19% of the 149 kindergarten children tested in the spring of 1988 scored below average (stanines 1-3) on the language portion of the Metropolitan Readiness Test.

The following year, there was an increase in kindergarten enrollment, mainly due to the delayed opening of the new elementary school. Of the 167 kindergarten children tested in the spring of 1989, approximately 23% scored below average (stanines 1-3) on the same test.

These data documented this writer's belief that a developmental listening program at the kindergarten level could make a substantial contribution to the students.

Causative Analysis

There is a wide difference in the developmental levels of the children entering the kindergarten program at this writer's school. The child must be 5 years of age before September 30th to be admitted to kindergarten.

Table 2

Summary of Metropolitan Readiness Tests Language Skill Area

Spring 1988 & 1989

Group	Above Average (stanines 7-9)	Average (stanines 4-6)	Below Average (stanines 1-3)
1988			
1	1	18	8
2	10	14	1
3	3	18	4
4	6	13	5
5	9	12	4
6	1	15	7
Totals	30	90	29
1989			
1	0	14	6
2	7	11	3
3	5	15	2
4	4	12	5
5	7	8	6
6	6	11	4
7	3	11	7
8	3	12	5
Totals	35	94	38

Children whose birthdays fall after this date through December 31st may be admitted after having taken a readiness test and the child's parents are counseled as to the child's results on the test. Many of the children are extremely young--4 years, 9 months, upon entering the program, while others are almost 6 years old. The 6 year olds are the ones whose parents opted to give their child an extra year to mature before entering school. The children also enter school with varying experiences; many have been enrolled in preschool programs for one, two or three years on a full or part time basis.

Another contributing factor is the fact that many mothers have entered the workforce and with so many parents commuting out of the area for jobs, there is not much time to spend with their children. The average parent who commutes northward spends an average of four hours a day commuting to and from work due to the heavy amount of traffic encountered on the interstate highway. Children are dropped off at day care centers and babysitters before 6 AM and are picked up to return home after 6 PM. With the overstimulation of things to do, places to go and tasks to perform, leaves little time for much parent-child interaction.

Television is a powerful means of communication. When television was first introduced, it had the effect of bringing the family together. While there is some

evidence that watching TV is often a family activity, interaction between family members appears to be limited. Early research indicated that the introduction of television into homes generally had the effect of reorganizing leisure-time activities with a general decrease in the amount of family communication.

Television is a passive, one-way process. Children become "couch potatoes" as they sit passively absorbing "the tube" without the opportunity to interact. There is a danger that TV is making a nation of passive spectators rather than active participants.

Another factor contributing to poor listening is the fact that listening is not taught separately in the elementary school. During the 1950s and 1960s there was much research on listening, but according to Pearson and Fielding (1982) the emphasis has since shifted to reading and writing. Swanson (1986) blames the decline in student's academic performance on the failure of a curriculum in listening.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

The first step in the development of communication is taken through listening. Before the invention of printing, listening was the primary means of learning. Through listening an individual receives many of his ideas and much of the information which become a part of his beliefs and attitudes. It is through listening that

speech is learned, for without the ability to hear, a child remains mute until he is taught to talk.

Listening involves more than the ability to hear or to detect sounds. It includes active participation with the speaker. It involves following a conversation, and the development of an idea. In interpreting the spoken word, the listener takes into account gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice, as well as words used by the speaker. According to Allen, Brown & Yatvin (1986) listening may be defined as "the process through which meanings are assigned to messages that are heard or seen" (p. 10). Tutolo (1977) uses generic terms to define listening as "all imput that comes to us through the ear" (p. 262). To this writer, Lundsteen's (1971) definition best expresses what listening is, "the process by which spoken language is converted to meaning in the mind" (p. 9).

Danneman and Blennerhassett (1984) studied the listening span of preschoolers and found their comprehension levels to correlate heavily with their chronological age. Developmental differences in the child's language comprehension skills account for the differences in their working memory capacities. As children mature, their processing skills increase with exposure to language.

The child enters kindergarten with many habits and skills in the areas of listening and speaking, but none

are permanently established because they are based on the child's own perceptions (Harris, 1969).

DiStefano, Dole & Marzano (1984) cite the child's five years experience in listening before they enter school as reasons why listening is not new to them. Children have accustomed themselves to the passive listening that allows them to live with such background noises as the chatter of playmates and siblings, the sound of the radio or TV, or the conversation of adults, but will probably need help when the occasion arises for attentive listening.

According to Zigmond and Cicci (1968) upon entering kindergarten and through the remainder of his schooling, a child is expected to follow directions, even though he may not understand what is being asked of him. They project difficulties arise when children are expected to participate in paper and pencil activities when their ability to follow directions has not developed.

Most of the above factors can be attributed to the differing developmental levels of children as they enter the kindergarten program.

Parents have also been found to contribute to the child's listening ability. Fowler (1988) blames our "fast-pace society" and technology for changing our life styles, so little time is left for leisure-time reading. The two-parent working couple has led to a family that

wants everything--a nice home, two cars, fancy clothes, the latest electronic gadgets, expensive vacations, etc. and they are willing to work to enjoy such luxuries. These "detractors" are taking the parents out of the home, leaving little precious time with their children. Children are now being raised by babysitters and schools.

A child's first teacher is his parents, who are directly responsible for the child's language development (Mackintosh, 1964). The child spends five years with the parent before entering school and spends more time per day listening than in any other communication activity.

The home can be an obstacle or a help to listening according to Faix (1975). If the child is constantly put down by his parents or siblings, or told "don't bother me," the child gets the feeling no one wants to listen to him. On the other hand, some parents are very supportive of what the child has to say, and listening becomes an asset to that child. Faix believes that more activities between home and school would strengthen the parent-child communication link.

The use of the television has had an impact on the listening of children. Mackintosh (1964) labels the twentieth century as the "Listening Age," (p. 13) and cites the television as contributing greatly to the total amount of time spent in listening. Baker (cited in Dewalt, 1988) reported that in 1987 the A. C. Nielson

Company indicated that 59% of American households have more than one television. It also indicated that the average family watched television 49 hours and 48 minutes per week. This was consistent with Tucker (cited in Pomarico, 1987) who stated the average American family watches TV more than seven hours a day. Fourteen years before, Liebert et al. (1973) reported that the Broadcasting Yearbook 1971 estimated that the average TV was turned on an average of six hours and 18 minutes per day.

Collectively, people in the United States spend close to 400 million hours each day watching television. Liebert & Schwartzberg (cited in Tregoning, 1986) claim that the average pre-schooler watches three to four hours a day and the average 9-10 year old child watches four to six hours a day.

The amount of time spent watching television shows a gradual increase from age 3 to about the beginning of adolescence, with a peak between the ages of 11 and 13, after which it declines somewhat during adolescence (Baranowski, 1977; Tregoning, 1986). Tuchscherer (1988) reported that by the time children are in second to third grade they can recall 65% of the action they had seen on television. This increase continues until by the time they reach eighth grade they are able to recall 90% of the program's action.

Television has been mentioned as a babysitter serving to temporarily replace parental supervision of the child (Gantz & Masland, 1986; Singer & Singer, 1983). Baranowski (1977) believes that adults use TV as an "electronic babysitter" (p. 384). Singer & Singer (1983) claim that the babysitting function of television is attractive and pervasive for parents in middle and lower socioeconomic groups.

Gantz and Masland's (1986) study found mothers were most often motivated to use TV as a babysitter so they could take care of household tasks because it was readily available and the least objectionable alternative for the child. The respondents reported using the TV as a babysitter at least one hour each day. It was more frequently used for younger children and by mothers with less formal education who thought television was basically okay for the child and who watched more television themselves.

The effects of television viewing on educational achievement and aspiration have also received some attention. Baranowski (1977) found little, if any, relationship between viewing pattern and intelligence on school achievement. Six years later, Rubinstein (1983) found that heavy viewing related inversely to school achievement.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress

(cited in Dewalt, 1988) studied 70,000 nine, thirteen and seventeen-year old students and found that those who watched more than four hours of TV per day possessed poorer reading skills than children who watched less than four hours per day. Fetter (cited in Dewalt, 1988) indicated that televiewing of one to two hours per day does not hinder reading achievement, but reading achievement decreases as televiewing time increases beyond two hours per day.

This writer found what Urie Bronfenbrenner (cited in Winn, 1985) had to say concerning television quite appropriate:

> Like the sorcerer of old, the television set casts its magic spell, freezing speech and action, turning the living into silent statues so long as the enchantment lasts. The primary danger of the TV screen lies not so much in the behavior it produces, as in the behavior it prevents; the talks, the games, the family festivities and arguments through which much of the child's learning takes place and through which his character is formed. Turning on the television set can turn off the process that transforms children into people. (p. 141)

Teachers recognize the importance of listening instruction, but that is not enough. Recognition and actual implementation of a listening program are two

different things.

Teachers need to pay attention to listening skills or else they will become the "Cinderella of the communication skills" (Reid, 1978, p. 8). All other areas of the language arts are taught--reading, writing and speaking, but listening is left behind.

Rose (1982) and Gold (1975) believe that listening is the most neglected skill, yet listening skills are the foundation for achievement in speaking, reading and writing.

Students in grades 1 through 12 spend almost one-half to two-thirds of their class time listening to instruction, directions and assignments (Swanson, 1986).

According to Cunningham (1982) most teachers do not provide much instruction in listening. If children were taught how to listen and what to listen for, there would be big increases in listening comprehension.

Among the reasons Devine (1978) and Hansen (1981) state as to why comprehension skills are not taught is that there are so many other things to teach that there is not enough time to teach everything; but when listening instruction is given, it usually works.

Rubin (1985) attempted to contact 150 in-school and out-of-school projects that listed oral communication as their objective. One half of the projects responding indicated that oral communication instruction was their

lowest priority.

It was found by Rankin (1928) that adults spend 70% of their waking day in some form of verbal communication. Listening ranked first with 42.1%, talking second (31.9%), reading third (15%) and writing fourth (11%) among adults. Almost three times as much time is spent on listening than reading. Rankin's study of language arts in the Detroit public schools revealed that 10% of school instruction was devoted to oral expression, 30% to written expression, 8% to understanding of oral language and 52% to understanding written language.

Twenty-two years after Rankin, Wilt (1950) hypothesized that children spend the majority of their time listening than in any other activity at school. Teachers were sampled and it was found that children spend 57.5% of their time in school in listening situations. Teachers were also asked to rank by importance the four language arts. Reading was ranked the most important by 61.8% of the teachers, listening was ranked second by 42.7%, speaking was ranked third by 37.3% with writing ranked last by 79%. Wilt concludes that children "should do more talking and listening to each other and less listening to the teacher" (p. 635).

The Sperry Corporation (cited in Brownell, 1986) used listening as an advertising ploy when it billed itself as the company that "understands how important

it is to listen" (p. 2). Their pamphlet "Your Personal Listening Profile" shed light on the importance of listening and ranked listening on three factors.

Table 3

Sperry Corporation Survey

Communication Skill	When Learned	Extent Used	Extent Taught
Listening	1st	45%	4th
Speaking	2nd	30%	3rd
Reading	3rd	16%	2nd
Writing	4th	9%	1st

These factors were found to be consistent with Rankin (1928).

The world today produces such astounding sounds that people have become accustomed to "tuning out" that which they do not wish to hear. Children are too young to make the decision, so they must be given help. Harris (1969) believes that listening is developmental and is primarily "self-taught imitation" (p. 122).

Both Spodek (1978) and Russell and Russell (1959) cite a number of children today are "tuning out" due to the constant bombardment of messages and instructions by adults. When they come to school, they apply this survival mechanism and do not pay attention. Anderson (1949) found that for many children the only listening

instruction they received were the teachers' admonitions to "pay attention" or "listen carefully."

DeHaven (1979) believes that listening skills must be taught to children if they are to acquire them at all. Listening more does not seem to remedy the situation; they need to listen better.

Taylor (1964) blames bad attitudes toward listening from experiences learned in school or at home. Children do not listen because they equate it with "getting told what to do" and they believe that if it is important enough, it will be repeated.

In conclusion, listening is an important component of the four communication skills. The review of the literature provided the writer with the fact that listening has been important for over fifty years with much written in the early to mid 1970s. A resurgence in listening literature is now occuring with little or no focus at the kindergarten level where it should be, considering the amount of time spent in listening daily to parents, to teachers, to peers and to the television.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Statement of Goals

This practicum was designed to assist kindergarten children in developing the skills necessary to be a good listener. The following goals were projected for this practicum:

1 To provide a developmental listening program for kindergarten children.

2 To improve the listening skills necessary for continued academic growth throughout the primary grades.

Behavioral Expectations

This writer believed that a good, developmental foundation in listening would have a direct effect on learning. Terminal expectations for this practicum attempted to accomplish the following:

Objective 1: After listening to a story read orally, students will circle their responses to 5-6 questions on each of three stories with 80% accuracy.

Objective 2: Kindergarten students will recognize the sequence of events in material presented orally with

80% accuracy on three sequencing activities.

Objective 3: Kindergarten students will follow a two-step oral direction with 90% accuracy on five measures as recorded on a pupil checklist.

Objective 4: Kindergarten students will participate in a variety of classroom learning activities involving listening as evidenced by at least 90% participation on a classroom roster of listening activities.

Objective 5: Parent-child interaction will increase through the use of take-home listening activity packets as measured by participation of 80% of the children and parents using the packets as indicated in the Developmental Listening Activities Log.

Standards of Performance and Evaluation Tools

These five behavioral expectations were measured using the following assessment instruments:

Objective 1: Kindergarten students listened to three stories read orally, one story read every three weeks. They circled their responses to five or six questions about each story using a paper and pencil test. One test used was from the Standards of Learning manual. Two other tests were developed by this writer. The standard of achievement was mastery of 13 out of 17 items as recorded on a pupil checklist.

Objective 2: Kindergarten students listened to three stories read orally. Using picture sequence cards of

three and four events, the students retold the story, putting the cards in the eorrect order. The standard of achievement was the correct sequencing of 8 out of 10 cards.

Objective 3: Kindergarten students were asked to follow five two-step oral directions over the 12 weeks of the practicum. The standard of achievement was 9 out of 10 directions would be followed correctly.

Objective 4: Kindergarten students participated in classroom learning activities involving listening. Student participation at least two times a week was recorded on a checksheet in the Developmental Listening Activities Log.

Objective 5: Parent-child interaction increased through the use of take-home packets (books/tapes; books/records; books) at least three times a week.

This writer conducted a pre- and post-practicum survey of the children in the class, as well as the parents. The student survey sampled the children's attitudes toward listening before and after implementation took place. Each child indicated their answers by "X"ing a happy face, a sad face, or a face with no expression. The pre-practicum parent survey was used to gain information about the kinds of stories the children liked to listen to, as well as to find out if the child had access to a tape player or record player to listen to the stories that would be sent home in the listening

packets. Parents were also asked to indicate the amount of time spent weekly watching television (see Appendix A, B, and C). A post-practicum parent survey provided parent feedback on the program in relation to their child's progress in the listening program (see Appendix D).

The practicum writer kept a daily Developmental Listening Activities Log where the date, activitiy, and comments were recorded, as well as checksheets for each objective tested. Individual folders containing each pupil's work related to listening was also used during the implementation of this practicum.

Few standardized tests in listening have been developed for use by kindergarten children. Because of the expense of these tests, the writer continued to use the Metropolitan Readiness Test, Level 2, Form P which was to be administered in the spring of 1990.

Description of Plans for Analyzing Results

A number of factors were used to evaluate the effectiveness of the listening program. A comparison of previous years results on the Assessment of Minimum Requirements from the Standards of Learning objectives with this year's results were used in table form to show the number of children passing and failing practicum objective one for 1990.

This writer indicated the number of children completing each of the practicum objectives two and three in table

form. The frequency of books checked out by the children was shown for objective five in table form.

Feedback from the post-practicum parent survey, as well as the student survey, provided information as to how the parents perceived the listening program as helping their child.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions

A large number of kindergarten children at this writer's school were having difficulty with listening comprehension as exhibited by their poor performance on standardized tests, and on state-mandated assessment procedures. As a kindergarten teacher, this writer was in the position to implement a developmental listening program.

Listening is the "primary" form of communication because it appears before speaking, reading and writing. Quandt (1983) refers to listening as the "foundation" of all other forms of language (p. 91). Swalm (1974) and Witty and Sizemore (1958) believe that listening is better for learning in early childhood than reading because more learning takes place through listening. Much of the knowledge a child comes to school with has been learned through his senses. At age 5, the child's ears have had the most experience in that type of learning.

Such factors as class size, the physical setting of the classroom, the sex and age of the children and subject-matter areas were all mentioned by Faix (1975) as either a help or a hinderance to listening. Also

important was time of day scheduling. Children were found to be more alert in the morning hours before lunch or recess, than in the afternoon. Weather conditions and unusual school routines can contribute to poor listening habits. Young children were also found to prefer listening to reading.

Lundsteen (1985) conducted an informal survey of approximately 50 books with listening themes and grouped them according to three categories: awareness of sounds, valuing of quiet and poetic sounds, and listening to others. Teachers are encouraged to use these listening books to further comprehension and enhance both listening and reading into the "dynamic duo" (p. 3).

Listening comprehension can be improved if teachers were to use direct instructional strategies (Pearson & Fielding, 1982). They suggest using active verbal responses to questions during and after listening to a story, listening to good children's literature and directing instruction toward reading and writing. Children should be actively involved in some kind of activity related to the story after listening, rather than engaging in a passive activity.

Kratoville (1987) designed a manual of stories and exercises at three levels of difficulty which are read to the child who repeats the story back to the teacher. Immediate auditory recall is fostered as well as

verbalization and imagination. Further instructional activities such as illustration and pantomine can be carried out using the stories. The 16 listening exercises are to help the child learn to listen, to follow directions and develop auditory memory.

Teachers are not very effective at asking questions according to Shoop (1987). The majority of teachers ask questions at the literal level (recall) or ask affective response questions. Questions should stimulate thought on the part of the child. Asking questions before, during and after a story have been found to stimulate language interaction. Shoop advocates the use of question clusters incorporating four levels of questions (a) literal or recall of information, (b) inferential has implicit information with a range of correct answers, (c) evaluative has the child apply what he/she already knows to what he/she has heard in the story, and (d) creative has the listener change roles and become the storyteller.

Ruddell (1974) utilizes three levels of comprehension--factual, interpretive, and applicative--in three major categories--pre-story, during the reading, and post-story. A child's prior experiences are found to be very helpful in making inferences as stories are told, but not all children have had the same experiences, so some may have difficulty with these lines of questioning.

Children comprehend at three cognitive levels--literal,

interpretive and critical (Tutolo, 1977). He believes that young children should have much practice in literal and interpretive comprehension before moving on to critical listening. Setting the purpose for listening should be stated to the children before any story is begun. After reading part of the story children should be asked to interpret what they have heard thus far. In this way we are building a sequential listening program.

Reliable research in dealing with listening comprehension is hard to find according to Choate and Rakes (1987). Most of the available information has been how-to's and recipes for practice. This writer found this to be true also. Reading aloud to young children is very important and was encouraged. Following review of some other listening models, Choate and Rakes devised their own model--the Structured Listening Activity (SLA). Using a five-step sequenced process, students learn to structure their thinking and understanding of a story. Choate and Rakes seem to use many of Shoop's (1987) questioning techniques in this study, since three levels of questions were asked, as well as the content of the story tied to the student's experiences. Although sizeable gains were made by the students involved in their research, the authors' still believe more research is needed in using the model.

Teaching listening comprehension skills to young

children is very important. Most of what has been written deals with teaching older children, second grade and up, and not kindergarten children. Although a few methods have been cited, there has not been one proven to be the best. Reading aloud to young children on a daily basis was found to be instrumental in furthering listening skills. Questioning techniques seem to play an important part in just how much of the story is understood by the children. Literal or recall questions appear to be the easiest for both the student to answer and for the teacher to ask because they do not take much thought or time to prepare. With a little more preparation on the part of the teacher in the questions asked about stories read, the comprehension levels of the children will be much higher. But teachers must also keep in mind when formulating the questions that some children may not have had the same experiences that others in the classroom have experienced and they may react differently or unexpectedly.

Description of Selected Solutions

In analyzing the literature, much evidence was found to support the fact that listening should be taught. Since limited research on listening programs is available for the kindergarten level, an attempt to develop such a listening program was begun. Due to lack of materials, the amount of time required for teacher training, and the openess of the kindergarten classrooms, the writer

implemented the listening program in her own classroom. It was hoped that the results of this project would be positive and that the project could be implemented for the entire kindergarten grade level during the next school year.

Different questioning techniques were used by this writer during storytime to compensate for the different levels and experiences of the children. These questions were used before, during and after stories are read aloud and incorporated higher level questions than just recall.

Stories and poetry with listening themes were read aloud on a daily basis. Story structure was stressed along with use of puppets, flannel board stories and dramatics. A classroom listening center was set up also.

Parents received listening tips to use at home with their children through weekly newsletter items. Also records and tapes were sent home for the children to listen to and complete an activity to go along with the story. In this way parents were involved in the home setting as their child's teacher.

Listening was stressed during the entire day, as well as during the special listening training which was given in 30 minute lessons, three days a week. Because the kindergarten schedule is so tight, this writer carried out the listening program after lunch. Although Faix (1975) said this time should be in the morning before lunch

or recess, this writer was unable to do so due to special area classes (art, music, library, P.E., computer) being held in the morning with lunch being served at 11 AM.

Report of Action Taken

The major objective of this program was to enhance the listening skills of kindergarten students through the use of a cooperative home and school listening program. The solution strategy for this practicum began after receiving approval in March, 1990 to begin the implementation phase.

Before the practicum was implemented, each parent was asked to respond to a parent survey (see Appendix B) and each child was administered a listening survey (see Appendix C).

The writer secured all necessary supplies and materials through personal funds which included file folders, portfolio folders, cassette tapes and individual storybooks.

Individual worksheets with the title and author of the story, directions to parents, new vocabulary words and questions about each story were prepared in duplicate and laminated by the instructional assistant to keep them in good condition for the amount of use they received. Each book, record/tape and worksheet was numbered consecutively to facilitate recordkeeping. To begin the program implementation, the writer used seven

books with records and 18 books with tapes. The quality of the tapes was very poor due to inferior recording equipment. Seventeen additional stories without records or tapes were added during the implementation period so that a total of 42 books were available for selection (see Appendix E).

Each child received his own listening portfolio folder to carry his materials home three times a week and was responsible for returning to school each time.

The writer maintained a file folder for each student's work including the comprehension questions for objective one, sequence stories for objective two, following directions for objective three and the answer sheets for the take-home activities for objective five. The writer also maintained a daily Developmental Listening Activities Log to record information (see Appendix F).

The children received initial instruction in how to care for the materials and the selection procedure. Each child was responsible for selecting the story and record/tape they wished to take home, along with the worksheet. Each morning upon arrival at school they would place their materials on the floor in front of the room and give the writer their completed take-home activity. When everyone had arrived, the children were permitted to select the materials for use that evening. The writer

recorded in the daily Developmental Listening Activities Log the number of the book selected. All materials to take home were placed in the individual portfolios and put away in backpacks or totebags. Materials were sent home Monday through Thursday evenings and not over the weekend due to the possibility that they may become lost or forgotten.

Children were given listening instruction almost thirty minutes each day. Some lessons were short, while others were longer. The lessons were usually presented after lunch, but before recess. Many listening games were used when time was available before beginning another activity.

During the first week of instruction some basic rules of listening were discussed by the class before starting the lesson and were incorporated throughout the rest of the day.

This writer made extensive use of storybooks and poems with listening themes to raise an awareness and sensitivity about listening to the children in her classroom, as well as developing comprehension in listening and reading. Through the use of storybooks the children were exposed to the best in children's literature in school and through the use of the take-home packets.

The writer used many storybooks found in Lundsteen's

(1985) annotated bibliography of 50 books with listening themes. The children were made aware of the sounds in their environment and encouraged to participate by attempting to guess the sounds or provide the sounds themselves.

The preparation of materials for objective one involved reproducing the materials from the Standards of Learning manual for language arts, objective K.2. The story used was "The Mitten" and included an individual pupil response sheet with six questions. Children were required to circle the appropriate picture for their answer. This writer prepared two similar worksheets using the stories "Little Red Hen" and "A Trip to the Garden."

For objective two, materials were selected using sequence picture cards arranged on a worksheet. Three original sequence stories were written by this writer to correspond with the mixed-up pictures. Children listened to the story read orally, then were given the worksheets to cut and paste and place in the correct sequence.

Objective three involved following a two-step oral direction. The writer played the game "Simon Says" while giving the directions first, then asking the child to perform them. Most children had no difficulty following three two-step oral directions, so the writer made a change and used two paper and crayon activities.

Both exercises involved using all the colors in the child's crayon box. The children were told to draw a specific object with a certain color crayon and used such concepts as above, under, near, left, right and middle.

The children participated in a variety of classroom listening experiences for objective four. This writer secured a listening center with four sets of headphones from the media specialist along with books with records and tapes. Two children each shared a book. The children dramatized stories and performed such stories as "The Three Billy-Goats Gruff," "Little Red Hen," "The Three Bears," and "Jack and the Beanstalk." A variety of puppets (finger, stick and paper bag) were made by the children. The writer also used flannel board figures (Rapunzel, Little Red Hen and I Know an Old Woman Who Swallowed a Fly) to tell stories. Two field trips were taken by the class. The first one was to the police department, fire department and rescue squad of a nearby city. The children heard the sounds of a downtown area. The second field trip was to the local cable television studio and the children found out how important it is to listen for direction in the production of a program. Numerous walks were made around the school and the nature trail. Various art activities and games were used to make listening more fun and enjoyable.

One major element of this listening program was the

use of take-home activity packets for the children to use at home with their parents. It has always been the goal of this writer to incorporate parent participation in programs, with the understanding that parents are the child's first teacher. With the large number of children from two-parent working families, there is not much quality time available to spend with their children. Through the use of stories and activities, parents were asked to take some quiet time to spend alone with their child, to enjoy a good story and each other.

This writer also made use of differentiated questioning techniques (Ruddell, 1974; Shoop, 1987; Tutolo, 1977) and the retelling of stories in the child's own words.

Parents received listening news in a special column in the writer's parent newsletter published every other week. Six editions were published and included such topics as listening rules, the importance of listening, things to do at home when reading to your child, following directions, a mid-practicum progress report and the impact of television on the listening of children.

Due to circumstances beyond this writer's control, the School Board did not administer the Metropolitan Readiness Test to the children in May, 1990 as had been originally planned, so there are no standardized test results to report.

At the conclusion of the 12 week implementation

period each child was again administered the listening attitude survey and each parent was asked to complete a post-practicum parent survey (see Appendix D).

Each child received a Good Listener recognition certificate for their participation in the program on the last day of school.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The communication skill that a kindergarten child has had the most experience with is listening. Yet most are found to be poor listeners. This writer believed that if proper training in listening skills was begun at the kindergarten level, children would develop skills necessary to become a good listener.

The solution to the problem was to stress listening both in the classroom and at home through the use of differentiated questioning techniques, the reading of stories and poetry with listening themes, parent newsletter articles on listening, as well as through games, puppets, dramatics and field trips. The writer also made use of a take-home activity component to strengthen the parent-child interaction and allow for some quality time together.

The goals of this practicum were to provide a developmental listening program for kindergarten children and to improve the listening skills necessary for continued academic growth throughout the primary grades.

There were 23 children involved in the listening program initially. During the course of its implementation

one child transferred to another school out of the county. Two additional children were enrolled in the writer's class approximately 3-5 weeks into the program and were not included in the results of the listening program, but did participate minimally in the classroom portions of the program. As a result of this, only 22 children completed the listening program.

The writer designed specific objectives to achieve the goals for listening skill development.

Objective 1: After listening to a story read orally, students will circle their responses to 5-6 questions on each of three stories with 80% accuracy.

The results revealed that 18 of the 22 children passed the listening comprehension objective with a score of 13 or higher out of a possible score of 17. Table 4 illustrates the results for this objective.

Objective 2: Kindergarten students will recognize the sequence of events in materials presented orally with 80% accuracy on three sequencing activities.

The majority of children had much difficulty with this objective. The writer believes that sequencing is a difficult concept for young children to understand. The first two sequencing activities involved listening to a story, then cutting and pasting three picture sequence cards in the right order that the story was told. Most children did this successfully. The last activity presented

Table 4

Summary of Student Results for Objective 1

Listening Comprehension

Total Number of Students - 22

Number of Students	Score
4	17 *
6	16 *
4	15 *
4	14 *
0	13 *
1	12
1	11
1	10
0	9
1	8

Note. * denotes passing 80% minimum level

four picture sequence cards. Many children became confused with one of the pictures and mistook it for the first sequence, when it should of been last. The story, read orally to the children first, explicitly explained what was happening. As a result, only 12 of the 22 children successfully completed the sequencing activities with a score of 8 or higher out of a possible score of 10. Table 5 illustrates the results for this objective.

Table 5

Summary of Student Results for Objective 2

Sequencing of Events

Total Number of Students - 22	
Number of Students	Sequencing
11	10 out of 10 pictures *
0	9 out of 10 pictures *
1	8 out of 10 pictures *
2	7 out of 10 pictures
5	6 out of 10 pictures
0	5 out of 10 pictures
3	4 out of 10 pictures

Note. * denotes passing 80% minimum level

Objective 3: Kindergarten students will follow a two-step oral direction with 90% accuracy on five measures as recorded on a pupil checklist.

Results regarding objective three revealed 19 students out of 22 participating passed this objective with 90% accuracy. Mid-point through this exercise, the writer changed over to two paper and crayon exercises, thus increasing the point spread from 10 to 23 points. Table 6 provides a summary of the results for this objective.

Objective 4: Kindergarten students will participate

Table 6

Summary of Student Results for Objective 3

Two-Step Directions

Total Number of Students - 22	
Number of Students	Two-Step Directions
11	23 out of 23 directions *
5	22 out of 23 directions *
3	21 out of 23 directions *
0	20 out of 23 directions
1	19 out of 23 directions
2	18 out of 23 directions

Note. * denotes passing 90% minimum level

in a variety of classroom learning activities involving listening as evidenced by at least 90% participation on a classroom roster of listening activities.

The results obtained from this objective revealed 100% mastery for all children in this writer's classroom. Every child participated in classroom listening activities over and above the two times per week as initially planned.

Objective 5: Parent-child interaction will increase through the use of take-home listening activity packets as measured by participation of 80% of the children and parents using the packets as indicated in the Developmental Listening Activities Log.

A review of the Developmental Listening Activities Log indicated that 100% of the 22 children in this writer's class participated in the use of the take-home listening activity packets. The packets were taken home three times a week for each child with the exception being absences due to illness, etc. Table 7 provides a summary of the frequency of the books checked out for the take-home activity packets.

Before the practicum was implemented, each parent was asked to respond to a parent survey (see Appendix B). Parents were asked about their child's: (a) preschool attendance; (b) if they were read to on a regular basis; (c) use of the public library or bookmobile; (d) access to a record player and/or tape player; and (e) approximate number of hours per week spent watching television.

Parent surveys were returned from all 23 children in the writer's class. Results showed that 17 children had some preschool experience; 17 children were read to on a regular basis; eight children used the library or bookmobile; seven children had library cards; 16 children had access to a record player and 22 children had access to a cassette tape player.

There were varying amounts of television watching by the children in the writer's classroom with the majority watching approximately 4-10 hours of television per week as summarized in Table 8.

Table 7

Frequency of Books Checked Out for Take-Home Activity Packets

Frequency of Use	Book Number
22 times each	1 - 25
12 times	26
18 times	27
15 times	28
16 times	29
16 times	30
14 times	31
8 times	32
9 times	33
12 times	34
16 times	35
12 times	36
13 times	37
8 times	38
10 times	39
12 times	40
8 times	41
10 times	42

759 Total Books Checked Out

Table 8

Amount of Television Watched Per Week

1 response	1 ½ - 2 hours per week
10 responses	4 - 10 hours per week
9 responses	10 - 15 hours per week
3 responses	20 - 40 hours per week

The children were administered a listening attitude survey (see Appendix C) at the beginning of the practicum implementation. Children were asked to "X" their responses to oral questions using a happy face, a face with no expression or a sad face. This same survey was administered at the completion of the implementation period. The results of the pre- and post-survey are presented in Table 9.

There were no unusual results on the pre- and post-practicum student survey. Question three showed a vast improvement post-survey with an increase of ten children liking to listen to stories read by their teacher. The writer attributes this attitude change to the different kinds of stories read to the class, as well as the media used to present them.

In question five two children indicated pre-practicum that they did not like to listen to stories on a tape. In the post-practicum survey, six children did not like to listen to stories on a tape. The writer feels the poor

Table 9

Pre- and Post-Practicum Results of the Student Listening Attitude Survey

Happy Face		No Expression		Sad Face	
Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Question 1 How do you feel when you listen to a story?					
18	19	5	1	0	2
Question 2 Do you like to listen to stories read to you by your parents?					
17	18	4	4	2	0
Question 3 Do you like to listen to stories read to you by your teacher?					
11	21	9	1	3	0
Question 4 Do you like to listen to stories on records?					
18	16	2	2	3	4
Question 5 Do you like to listen to stories on a tape?					
15	16	6	0	2	6
Question 6 Do you like to watch television?					
18	19	3	1	2	2
Question 7 Are you a good listener at home?					
15	17	6	4	2	1
Question 8 Are you a good listener at school?					
22	18	1	4	0	0

quality of the tapes made listening to the stories very difficult for the children.

The post-practicum parent survey was sent out and returned from all 22 children in the writer's class during the last week of school (see Appendix D). Individual responses were given as to the number of listening activities the child had completed at home. A total of 21 parents said their child enjoyed the activities, while one parent responded that her child did not enjoy completing the take-home packets.

When asked to indicate the story or stories their child enjoyed the most, eight parents responded with "Clifford the Big Red Dog" stories and four indicated "The Gingerbread Man." Many other stories received one response each and are too numerous to list here.

Parents were asked to place an "X" on the statement that described their feelings about their child's listening ability. Nine parents indicated a big improvement in their child's listening ability; 11 saw a slight improvement and two saw no improvement in their child's listening ability. It must be noted that the one parent whose child did not enjoy the activities, did not see any improvement in her child's listening ability.

Question 5 pertained to the child's following directions at home. Sixteen parents responded that their child was following directions, five parents said they had

to repeat directions and one said they had to periodically repeat directions, depending upon the circumstances. This writer believes that when at school, the child learns to follow directions because the teacher is the authority figure and listening is stressed in all areas. The "carry-over" of following directions at home is just not stressed enough by parents.

The publication of six listening articles in the parent newsletters sent home every other week was found beneficial by all 22 respondents. All thought their child had benefited from participation in the listening program.

Among the changes parents recommend were (a) better tapes, (b) more books, (c) only two stories per week, (d) start after the first six weeks of school, (e) send books home over the weekend, (f) do not ask such detailed questions, and (g) the program should be passed on to each child year after year.

Parents were also given the opportunity to write their comments concerning the listening program. The writer found the parents very candid and enthusiastic. A number of parents indicated that it gave them some quality time with their child, they enjoyed the chance to participate, and felt it was a great program not only for listening. It gave the child a chance to have an important responsibility and show the importance of homework. Another parent indicated that besides learning

how to listen, it prepared her child for the larger work load and homework that would follow in first grade. Younger siblings at home were also found to benefit through their listening to the stories read.

The writer also analyzed the results of the Assessment of Minimum Requirements (see Table 10) from the Standards of Learning objectives for 1990.

Table 10

Summary of the Assessment of Minimum Skills for Kindergarten 1990

Number of Students	Number Achieving Total DPL Score	Objectives Most Frequently Not Met by Students	Number Attaining 75% of Language Arts SOL Objectives
1990			
143	125	K.2, 5, 6, 10	125

Note. DPL Score = Desired Performance Level

The two previous years' results on this assessment showed that 19 students in 1988 and 15 students in 1989 had difficulty meeting the minimum requirements of the Standards of Learning objectives. This year 18 students were indicated as not attaining 75% of the Language Arts objectives. Standards of Learning objective K.2--listening comprehension--was shown consistently over the past three years as the objective the most children had difficulty

passing. Since there are no individual classroom reports, this writer does not know the exact number of children who had difficulty with this specific objective, just the total amount of kindergarten children tested and how many passed at least 75% of the objectives. This writer believes that listening comprehension needs to be improved at the kindergarten level. Of the 18 students not passing the minimum requirements, one student in this writer's classroom did not attain 75% mastery.

The Metropolitan Readiness Test was not administered in May 1990 as had been planned earlier, so no results from this measure became available.

Discussions and Conclusions

In reviewing the data collected during the implementation of the developmental listening program, all of the objectives were not met as stated. However, significant growth did occur.

Four of the five practicum objectives were achieved by the majority of the 22 children involved in the listening program. Almost half of the students had difficulty mastering objective two--sequence of events--for this practicum. The writer believes that this difficulty can be attributed to many causes (a) a four-sequence story is too difficult for a kindergarten child to remember, (b) the children were involved in too many activities--listening, cutting pictures apart,

then pasting them in the correct sequence, (c) the pictures used in one of the stories had an adult, where a child would of been more appropriate, (d) one picture could be misinterpreted and placed in the wrong position if the child did not listen carefully to the story read initially.

In examining the results of the student listening attitude survey this writer concludes that many of the children had a change in their attitude toward listening and enjoyed listening more, both at home and school. The large number of children who indicated on the post-practicum survey that they liked to listen to stories read by their teacher was overwhelming considering that the children were read stories on a daily basis before the program was implemented, which leads the writer to conclude that it must have been the different ways the stories were presented that made the listening more enjoyable.

Since the Metropolitan Readiness Test was not administered, the writer was unable to use any standardized test to examine the program's effectiveness on the listening ability of the children who participated when compared to children in other classes who did not participate.

The level of parent involvement in the listening program was very supportive and enthusiastic throughout the 12 week implementation period. When absences occured

or a take-home activity not completed, many parents requested an extention of time to complete it with their child. The parents understood the importance of this program and wanted their child to make significant improvement in his listening ability.

The results confirmed this writer's expectations that listening can be improved if proper training in listening skills is begun at the kindergarten level. The need for teaching listening was apparent from the studies reported in the research as well as from observation of the target students.

Gold (1975) noted that if teachers are willing to take the time to make listening worthwhile, then listening comprehension can be improved. Trushin (1984) implemented a language development program to improve the listening skills of disadvantaged kindergarten children. Abelleira (1987) provided a teacher-directed listening skills program for first grade students. Preschool children were found to improve their listening skills through programs that make use of activities that are appropriate for their interest and developmental levels (Olsen, 1973). The results of these cited programs coincide with the writer's results that there was much growth in the listening ability of the children in her class due to the level of activity that the children participated in, both at school and at home.

The lack of interest demonstrated by the other kindergarten teachers in the writer's school is based on their lack of experience and not wanting to become involved in a program that requires much time and effort outside the normal school day.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the listening program be implemented after the first nine weeks of school.

2. Commercially produced cassette tapes with storybooks should be available for use in the take-home activity packets.

3. The number of take-home activity packets should be reduced to two per week, thus alleviating the amount of paperwork involved.

Dissemination

This practicum was shared with the principal of the school where it was implemented. It was also discussed with another kindergarten teacher at a school within the county.

The writer may submit the practicum results to the state kindergarten supervisor for a possible presentation at the early childhood conference to be held in October, 1990.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEY LETTER TO PARENTS

March 23, 1990

Dear Parents,

As you know, I am enrolled in the doctoral program in early and middle childhood at Nova University in Fort Iauderdale, Florida. Shortly, I will begin a minor practicum by implementing a listening program which will last approximately 12 weeks, until the end of school.

As one of my practicum objectives, I would like to implement some take-home listening activities (approximately 3 per week) that your child may complete at home under your supervision. The activities will take no longer than 15-20 minutes to complete.

Before I embark on this endeavor, I would appreciate it if you would take a few minutes to complete this survey about your child's listening habits at home and return it to me early next week.

I deeply appreciate your cooperation and support. Without your assistance I will not be able to conduct this program, which I hope will increase your child's listening comprehension, not only for the remainder of the year, but through their primary years of schooling.

When the program is concluded, I will ask you to complete another survey to help me evaluate the listening program.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at school between 8 AM and 3:45 PM.

Sincerely,

Geraldine E. Westwood

APPENDIX B

PRE-PRACTICUM PARENT SURVEY

Child's Name _____

1. What pre-school experience has your child had before entering school? Write "none" if child did not attend.
   Name & location of preschool _____
   How long? _____
2. Do you read books to your child on a regular basis?
   Please circle. Yes No
3. At what time of day does someone read to your child?
   _____
4. Does your child use the public library or bookmobile?
   Yes No
5. Does your child have a library card? Yes No
6. Please list some of your child's favorite books.
   _____ _____
   _____ _____
7. Approximately how many hours per week does your child watch TV? _____
8. How long does he/she watch in a sitting? _____
9. What program does he/she usually see on TV? _____
   _____
10. Does your child have access to a record player?
    Yes No
11. Does your child have access to a cassette tape player?
    Yes No

Thank you for completing this survey. Please return to Miss Westwood promptly!

APPENDIX C

STUDENT LISTENING ATTITUDE SURVEY

1. How do you feel when you listen to a story?

   Happy Face No Expression Sad Face

2. Do you like to listen to stories read to you by your parents?

   Happy Face No Expression Sad Face

3. Do you like to listen to stories read to you by your teacher?

   Happy Face No Expression Sad Face

4. Do you like to listen to stories on records?

   Happy Face No Expression Sad Face

5. Do you like to listen to stories on a tape?

   Happy Face No Expression Sad Face

6. Do you like to watch television?

   Happy Face No Expression Sad Face

7. Are you a good listener at home?

   Happy Face No Expression Sad Face

8. Are you a good listener at school?

   Happy Face No Expression Sad Face

APPENDIX D

POST-PRACTICUM PARENT SURVEY

Child's Name _____

1. Approximately how many take-home activities did you complete with your child?

   _____

2. Did your child enjoy the activities? Yes No

3. Please list the activity your child enjoyed the most & state why.

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. Please place an "X" on the statement that best describes your feeling about your child's listening ability.

   ____ I see a big improvement in my child's listening ability.
   ____ I see a slight improvement in my child's listening ability.
   ____ I see no improvement in my child's listening ability.

5. Is your child following directions at home, or are you repeating directions?

   _____

6. Did you find the newsletter articles on listening beneficial?

   Yes No

7. Do you think your child benefited from this program?___

   _____

8. Are there any changes you would recommend for next year?

   _____

   _____

9. Any additional comments. _____

   _____

APPENDIX E

LIST OF BOOKS USED FOR TAKE-HOME ACTIVITY PACKETS

#1 Bedtime for Frances--Russell Hoban

#2 Bremen-town Musicians--Ruth Belov Gross

#3 Chicken Soup with Rice--Maurice Sendak

#4 Elves and the Shoemaker--Freya Littledale

#5 Gingerbread Man--Ed Arno-illustrator

#6 Gingerbread Man--Karen Schmidt-illustrator

#7 House That Jack Built--David Cutts

#8 The Very Hungry Caterpillar--Eric Carle

#9 Jack and the Beanstalk--William Wiesner-illustrator

#10 Just in Time for the King's Birthday--E. B. Chance

#11 Lazy Jack--Bert Dodson-illustrator

#12 Over in the Meadow--Ezra Jack Keats-illustrator

#13 Pierre--Maurice Sendak

#14 Rumplestiltskin--Edith Tarcov

#15 Tale of Benjamin Bunny--Beatrix Potter

#16 Tale of Peter Rabbit--Beatrix Potter

#17 Three Billy-Goats Gruff--Susan Blais-illustrator

#18 The Story of Ping--Marjorie Flack

#19 Corduroy--Don Freeman

#20 Curious George Gets a Medal--H. A. Rey

#21 The Hungry Thing--Jan Slepian & Ann Seidler

#22 Jump, Frog, Jump--Robert Kalan

#23 Little Red Hen--Paul Galdone

#24 The Magic Fish--Freya Littledale

#25 Who Took the Farmer's Hat?--Joan Nodset

#26 Clifford's Puppy Days--Norman Bridwell

#27 Clifford Takes a Trip--Norman Bridwell

#28 George and Martha--James Marshall

#29 A Treeful of Pigs--Arnold Lobel

#30 The Ugly Duckling--Hans Christian Andersen

#31 Curious George Rides a Bike--H. A. Rey

#32 Curious George Takes a Job--H. A. Rey

#33 Katy No-Pocket--Emmy Payne

#34 Rich Cat, Poor Cat--Bernard Waber

#35 Six Foolish Fishermen--Benjamin Elkin

#36 The Three Wishes--Charles Perrault

#37 The Wild Baby--Jack Prelutsky

#38 Clifford's Family--Norman Bridwell

#39 Clifford at the Circus--Norman Bridwell

#40 Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear?--Nancy Carlstrom

#41 Morris the Moose Goes to School--Bernard Wiseman

#42 The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse--An Aesop Fable

APPENDIX F

DAILY LISTENING ACTIVITIES LOG SHEET

Week of _____

Date	Objective	Materials Used	Evaluation